DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 307 329 TM 013 488

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TITLE Dropout Data Analysis and Reporting: Caveats, Questions, and Recommendations.
PUB DATE Mar 89
NOTE 18p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Francisco, CA, March 27-31, 1989).
AVAILABLE FROM Office of Research and Development, Boston Public Schools, 26 Court St., 3rd Floor, Boston, MA 02108.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Data Analysis; *Data Collection; *Dropout Characteristics; Dropout Rate; Dropout Research; High Schools; *High School Students; Public Schools; Recordkeeping; *Statistical Data
IDENTIFIERS Boston Public Schools MA

ABSTRACT

Based on an assessment of the research of others and personal research experience, suggestions are provided on the analysis and reporting of data on high school dropouts. Most of the experience upon which these insights are based is associated with schools in Boston, Massachusetts. Topics covered include types of statistics to be reported, criteria for inclusion of a child in the dropout population, problems that arise from use of existing record-keeping systems, identification of the school system and grade during which the student dropped out, relationship between the conception of a "dropout" and the age of compulsory school attendance, definition and comparison of cohorts, data quality control, outcomes of students classified as dropouts, and evaluation of dropout prevention and intervention programs. The pilot data collection effort of the National Council on Educational Statistics, which will take place over the next 2 years, is lauded. A description of the Boston Public Schools procedures for reporting dropouts and calculating dropout rates is appended. (TJH)

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